

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 IO-13 JUSE-00
NSAE-00 SNM-02 TRSE-00 USIA-15 NSC-05 OES-06 OMB-01
ARAE-00 SCSE-00 SCA-01 L-03 H-02 DHA-02 PA-02 PRS-01
EB-08 SIL-01 LAB-04 /084 W

-----162016Z 066605 /40

P 161735Z MAR 77

FM AMCONSUL MAZATLAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1155

AMEMBASSY MEXICO PRIORITY

UNCLAS MAZATLAN 0154

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC, MX, PINT, ECON, CGEN, SNAR, DEA

SUBJ: SINALOA HIGHLIGHTS

1. "SINALOA OPINA" ON MARCH 15 FRONT PAGED A STORY THAT MAZATLAN POLICE INSPECTOR, CAPTAIN PINEDA FAVELA, HAD ANNOUNCED THAT DRUG SALES WITHIN THE PRN HAD FALLEN OFF. THE REDUCTION IN SALES WAS ATTRIBUTED TO THE SURPRISE SEARCHES CONDUCTED BY POLICE AGENTS WHO SOME TIME AGO FOUND CARTONS OF MARIHUANA BURIED IN THE MAIN PATIO OF THE PRISON. CAPTAIN PINEDA ALSO ANNOUNCED A SUBSTANTIAL REDUCTION IN THE AMOUNT OF ARMS FOUND IN THESE SURPRISE SEARCHES.

COMMENT: THIS IS THE FIRST OPEN ADMISSION BY THE MAZATLAN AUTHORITIES THAT DRUGS ARE AVAILABLE WITHIN THE PRISON, ALTHOUGH IT IS COMMON KNOWLEDGE TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC.

2. CULIACAN'S NOROESTE OF MARCH 13, STATED THAT ONE HUNDRED PRISONERS INCARCERATED IN THE STATE PENITENTIARY IN CULIACAN ARE BEING DEPRIVED OF THEIR CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS, SINCE THEY HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR MORE THAN ONE YEAR TO BE SENTENCED, SOME AS LONG AS THREE YEARS.

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COMMENT: SIX AMERICAN PRISONERS IN CULIACAN AND LOS MOCHIS FALL INTO THE OVER ONE YEAR CATEGORY. THE CONSUL HAS BEEN VISITING THE FEDERAL DISTRICT JUDGE IN CULIACAN EVERY MONTH FOR A RUN-DOWN ON THE STATUS OF THESE CASES. AS MENTIONED IN THE MONTHLY CULIACAN-LOS MOCHIS PRISONER REPORTS, THE JUDGE IS LONG ON PROMISES BUT SHORT ON ACTION. HE ADMITS HE IS

UNABLE TO GIVE THE SERVICE THAT HE SHOULD BUT STATES THAT MEXICO HAS REFUSED TO PROVIDE HIM THE ADDITIONAL HELP WITH WHICH TO HANDLE HIS EVER-INCREASING WORK LOAD AS A RESULT OF THE CAMPESINO LAND PROBLEMS AND OPERATION CONDOR. THE SITUATION WITHIN THE JUDGE'S OFFICE CANNOT BE RECTIFIED UNLESS HE GETS MORE PERSONNEL. PERHAPS THE TIME HAS COME FOR THE EMBASSY TO GIVE THIS HARD-WORKING, WELL-MEANING JUDGE A HAND BY CALLING THIS SITUATION TO THE ATTENTION OF THE APPROPRIATE AUTHORITIES IN MEXICO.

3. FURTHER ON THE THEME APPEARING IN THE LOCAL PRESS OF THE DISRUPTION TO THE SINALOAN ECONOMY CAUSED BY OPERATION CONDOR, AN ITEM IN LOS MOCHIS' EL DEBATE OF MARCH 12 ANNOUNCED THAT THE GOM WAS SPENDING TEN MILLION PESOS (DOLLARS 500,000) MONTHLY ON THE DESTRUCTION OF THE POPPY FIELDS VIA OPERATION CONDOR. THE ARTICLE SAID THAT THE DISPLACED WORKERS FROM THE MOUNTAINOUS AREAS, WHERE THE POPPIES WERE BEING ELIMINATED, WERE THROWING THEMSELVES ON THE ECONOMY OF THE CITIES, CAUSING SERIOUS SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. THE PAPER COMMENTED THAT THESE WORKERS HAD BEEN ACCUSTOMED TO SO MUCH EASY MONEY THAT THEY WERE NOT SATISFIED WITH JOBS AT PREVAILING WAGES. THE ARTICLE RECOMMENDED THAT THE GOM SHOULD MATCH THE MONEY PUT INTO CONDOR 1 AND PLOUGH IT INTO THE CITIES' ECONOMY IN AN ATTEMPT TO BOLSTER IT WITH NEW INDUSTRIES AND JOBS.

4. COLUMNIST ALEJANDRO OLAS OLIVAS, IN LOS MOCHIS EL DEBATE OF MARCH 9, COMMENTED THAT THE RUNNING FEUD BETWEEN GOVERNOR CALDERON AND LAURO DIAZ CASTRO, PRESIDENT OF CAADES, IS A SERIOUS THREAT TO THE ECONOMY OF SINALOA. HE SUGGESTED THAT

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PERHAPS IT WAS THE TIME FOR PRESIDENT LOPEZ PORTILLO TO INTERVENE BEFORE THE SINALOAN ECONOMY IS IRREPARABLY DAMAGED. MATTHEWS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, MARIJUANA, PENAL SYSTEM, DRUG SEIZURES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 16-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977MAZATL00154
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770090-0765
Format: TEL
From: MAZATLAN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770355/aaaabvzc.tel
Line Count: 100
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 7bec80b7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 06-Oct-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3094709
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SINALOA HIGHLIGHTS
TAGS: CASC, PINT, ECON, CGEN, SNAR, MX, DEA
To: STATE MEXICO
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/7bec80b7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009